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a computer storage medium and a computer program code mechanism embedded in the computer storage medium for causing a computer to monitor a user's usage of an interface of a target application, the interface comprising a plurality of operations to be selected by a user, comprising:

a first computer code device configured to directly monitor user selections of the plurality of operations of the interface by the user automatically upon start-up of the target application, and configured to generate a log of the monitored data, the log indicating the selections of the plurality of operations by the user; and

a second computer code device configured to communicate the log of the monitored data to a remote site.

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Initially, Applicants note that the returned PTO-1449 form of the IDS filed March 1, 2001, appears to inadvertently not have initialed reference AO cited thereon. It is respectfully requested that confirmation of consideration of that reference AO be acknowledged on the record.

Claims 1-28 are pending in this application. Claims 1-28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. patent 5,566,291 to Boulton et al. (herein "Boulton").

Applicant and applicants' representative wish to thank Examiners Tran and Kincaid for the interview granted on April 21, 2003. During that interview the outstanding rejections were discussed in detail. Further, during that interview applicants' representative presented comments to the allowability of the claims over the applied art, and proposed claim amendments were discussed to even further distinguish the claims over the applied art. The present response sets forth the discussed claim amendments and comments in support of the

allowability of the claims. As a result of the interview the Examiners indicated they would further consider the allowability of the amended claims over the applied art when formally presented in a filed response.

Addressing the rejection of claims 1-28 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Boulton, that rejection is traversed by the present response.

It is initially noted that each of the independent claims is amended by the present response to clarify a feature recited therein. Specifically, independent claim 1 is amended by the present response to clarify that the monitoring of the user selections of the plurality of operations of the interface by the user is performed “automatically upon start-up of the target application”. That subject matter is fully supported by the original specification, for example at page 20, line 3 et seq. As discussed in that portion of the specification, when a target application MB starts up, the MB object 1300 calls a function startMonitoring of a CMonitoringIF object 1305, which begins logging data corresponding to a user’s usage of a user interface 510. As clear from that description in the specification such a start of monitoring is automatic upon start-up of the target application and does not require the user to execute any specific operations, besides starting-up the target application, to begin the monitoring. The other independent claims 8, 15, and 22 are similarly amended as in independent claim 1 noted above.

The outstanding rejection is traversed in that Boulton differs from the claims in many aspects. Boulton is in fact directed to a very different device with a very different objective than that of the claimed invention. More particularly, Boulton is directed to a device that allows a user to generate feedback by entering a feedback mode and typing in feedback

comments into a computer. Those feedback comments can then be sent to an appropriate party.²

Boulton first differs from the claims as clearly the feedback executed in Boulton is not performed “automatically upon start-up of the target application”. It is clear from the teachings in Boulton that the user in Boulton must enter a feedback mode and must type in feedback comments to be sent. No automatic monitoring is performed in Boulton.

Furthermore, Boulton does not monitor the same information as monitored in the claims. Independent claim 1 recites “a monitoring unit configured to directly monitor a user’s selections of the *plurality of operations of the interface* by the user” (emphasis added); the other independent claims recite a similar limitation. That is, in the claims the different operations on an interface selected by a user are monitored. Boulton does not teach or suggest such a feature.

To meet the above-note claim limitations the outstanding Office Action cites Boulton at column 4, lines 47-55.³ However, that portion of Boulton does not meet the above-noted claimed features.

At column 4, lines 47-55, Boulton merely discusses generating a feedback record to satisfy a reviewer’s visual preferences. That portion in Boulton is unrelated to the above-noted feature of monitoring the operations on an interface that a user selects, and it is unclear on what basis that portion of Boulton is cited.

It is also noted that Boulton does not disclose or suggest generating any log indicating which ones of different operations on an interface a user selects, as also required in the claims.

² See, for example, the Abstract of Boulton.

³ Office Action of December 23, 2002, page 3, lines 4-6.

In maintaining the rejection, the outstanding Office Action also quotes the Abstract of Boulton and cites the disclosure at column 12, lines 46-56.⁴

However, the teachings in Boulton at column 12, lines 46-56, of the technical attributes 512 are not directed to any user selection of different operations on an interface.

It is also again noted that the above-noted differences between the claims and the teaching in Boulton essentially result from the fact that Boulton is directed to a very different device with very different objectives than that of the present invention.

The claims as currently written are directed to monitoring how a user utilizes an interface, such as graphical user interface as a non-limiting example, of a target application.

Boulton has no such objective, but instead Boulton discloses a system to allow a user to type in and provide feedback for a reviewer. Boulton does not address features related to the claimed features.

In such ways, each of independent Claims 1, 8, 15, and 22, and the claims dependent therefrom, distinguish over the teachings in Boulton.

It is also noted that the dependent claims set forth further limitations neither taught nor suggested by Boulton, and which were apparently misunderstood in the Office Action.

First, with respect to dependent Claims 2, 9, 16, and 23, the noted portions in Boulton at column 5, lines 8-18, and column 15, lines 40-50, have no relevance to the claimed features therein as Boulton does not teach or suggest monitoring different operations on a display screen. Again Boulton merely provides an opportunity for a user to type in and provide feedback.

Dependent Claims 3, 10, 17, and 24 recite further that the “target application is an image forming device and the interface is an operation panel of the image forming device”.

⁴ Office Action of December 23, 2002, page 3, lines 6-15.

To meet that claim limitation the outstanding Office Action cites the teachings in Boulton at column 10, lines 35-36.⁵

However, at column 10, lines 35-46, Boulton is merely directed to a reviewer receiving the feedback information through a network. Boulton makes no mention in that portion of any type of image forming device, much less monitoring the different operations on an operation panel of an image forming device. The noted teachings in Boulton do not meet the above-noted claimed features.

With respect to dependent Claims 4, 11, 18, and 25 further reciting that "the target application is an appliance and the interface is an operation panel of the appliance", that feature is neither taught nor suggested by Boulton. With respect to that claim limitation the outstanding Office Action cites Boulton at column 8, lines 55-64.⁶

However, the noted teachings in Boulton at column 8, lines 55-64, are completely irrelevant to the claimed features. That is, at the noted portion Boulton does not disclose or suggest monitoring any operations on an operation panel of an appliance.

With respect to dependent claims 5, 12, 19, and 26, no teachings in Boulton at column 12, lines 47-56, address the features recited therein, and it is unclear on what basis that noted passage in Boulton is relied upon.

With respect to dependent claims 6, 13, and 27, no teachings in Boulton at column 3, lines 18-32, address similar features, and particularly that portion in Boulton is directed to a reviewer organizing feedback and is not directed to determining how many sessions are to be executed prior to communicating the log of the monitored data.

⁵ Office Action of December 23, 2002, page 3, lines 19-21

⁶ Office Action of December 23, 2003, page 3, lines 22-24.

Further, with respect to dependent claims 7, 14, 21, and 28, Boulton at column 39, lines 50-65, does not provide any teaching or indication of communicating a log of monitored data by internet mail, and it is unclear on what basis that portion of Boulton is relied upon.

In such ways, each of the dependent claims are believed to even further distinguish over the teachings in Boulton.

As no other issues are pending in this application, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and it is hereby respectfully requested that this case be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend Claims 1, 8, 15, and 22 as follows:

1. (Three Times Amended) A system comprising:

an interface of a target application, the interface comprising a plurality of operations to be selected by a user;

a monitoring unit configured to directly monitor user selections of the plurality of operations of the interface by the user automatically upon start-up of the target application, and to generate a log of the monitored data, the log indicating the selections of the plurality of operations by the user;

a communicating device configured to communicate the log of the monitored data to a remote site.

8. (Three Times Amended) A system comprising:

interface means of a target application means, the interface means for providing a plurality of operations to be selected by a user;

monitoring means for directly monitoring user selections of the plurality of operations of the interface means by the user automatically upon start-up of the target application means, and for generating a log of the monitored data, the log indicating the selections of the plurality of operations by the user;

communicating means for communicating the log of the monitored data to a remote site.

15. (Three Times Amended) A method of monitoring usage of an interface of a target application, the interface including a plurality of operations to be selected by a user, comprising the steps of:

directly monitoring user selections of the plurality of operations of the interface by the user automatically upon start-up of the target application;

generating a log of the monitored data, the log indicating the selections of the plurality of operations by the user; and

communicating the log of the monitored data to a remote site.

22. (Three Times Amended) A computer program product comprising:
a computer storage medium and a computer program code mechanism embedded in the computer storage medium for causing a computer to monitor a user's usage of an interface of a target application, the interface comprising a plurality of operations to be selected by a user, comprising:

a first computer code device configured to directly monitor user selections of the plurality of operations of the interface by the user automatically upon start-up of the target application, and configured to generate a log of the monitored data, the log indicating the selections of the plurality of operations by the user; and

a second computer code device configured to communicate the log of the monitored data to a remote site.